

28 February 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Analysis Branch, DDO/DR
FROM : Chief, Publications Staff, ODC
SUBJECT : Release of CIA/RR GM 62-1, The Berlin Wall,
February 1962, Confidential, to Foreign
Governments

1. It is requested that the attached copies of subject report be forwarded as follows:

160-164
165
166-168
169
170-171
172
173
174

25X1

2. All ODC responsibilities as defined in the DDI memorandum of 13 August 1952, "Procedures for Dissemination of Finished Intelligence to Foreign Governments," as applicable to this report, have been fulfilled.

25X1

14 Attachments

DOCUMENT NO. 2
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C 1989
NEXT REVIEW DATE:
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 198129 REVIEWER:

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Copy No. 67

Raf ✓
29 FEB 1962

GEOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

*RECEIVED
15 MAR 1962*

CIA/RR GM 62-I
February 1962

THE BERLIN WALL



DOCUMENT NO.
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE:
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 29/3/79 REVIEWER:

25X1

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

WARNING

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

THE BERLIN WALL

The Berlin Wall is now a fact of life. It has and will continue to have fundamental influence on the everyday life of Berliners and on East-West negotiations. The purpose of this report is to describe the wall as it stands today to provide a framework for evaluating incoming intelligence and the likelihood of making changes in the wall's configuration. The wall is a man-made structure, and permanent structures. Changes can still be expected but they probably will be made slowly in character and will have little effect on the functioning of the wall.

Evolution of the Wall

The border between East Berlin and West Berlin was defined by the European Advisory Commission on 22 July 1945. The border ran through the center of the city in a jagged line that follows the borough boundaries as established by a decree of 12 May 1945. At that time, the two cities had little in common except for their status as separate entities. As a result, the border was piecemeal along the middle of streets or cuts through buildings and across plots of land.

Even before 13 August 1961, all streets that crossed the border were blocked off to traffic. In addition, all pedestrian crossings along the border were blocked off to pedestrian traffic. Pedestrian traffic was restricted to an area 10 meters wide around the border. The Berlin U-Bahn (underground electric railroad) also crossed the border at several points. Although bars were facilitated for inspection and control of traffic, such restrictions were not considered discriminatory, as the author of

refugees attested.

The sealing of crossing points between East and West Berlin began before daylight on 13 August 1961. Initially, the methods used were somewhat fairly crude and expeditious. Beginning about 15 August, however, more permanent and elaborate structures were put into place. On 17 August, the border began to take on some of the characteristics of a real "wall." Mayor Braun first publicly referred to the border barriers as a "wall" in his speech to the Bundestag on 18 August 1961. He referred to it as the "Wall of China." On 19 September the Spandauer Volksblatt referred to the barrier as the "Berlin Wall." The title was adopted readily and has been used frequently since that time.

At first, several of the crossing points along the border were blocked by a single fence or a row of trees. Some streets were completely cut off and attached at the ends to fences or existing walls or fences. Other points were closed off by removing a section of the sidewalk, street and paving the removed section. In some cases, the two methods were combined. Subsequently, concrete and wooden posts were installed to support the fence. In addition, barbed-wire and concertina wire construction began to appear at various points along the wall, and windows and doors were sealed. By the end of August, the border had been sealed and construction expedited to assume the character of the obstacle now commonly called the "wall."

The sealing of the wall and its rigid control prompted several dramatic changes

by crossing through the barriers. The West German authorities responded by restoring the destroyed portions and tightening security along the wall. Such efforts were reasonably successful. In October, however, in the Moabit neighborhood another mass construction effort was organized and barriers across

likely avenues of escape were removed. The current strength of existing posts at crossing points is variable. Posts are usually spaced at 10-15 feet apart at Friedrichstrasse and other crossing points, strengthening the walls, adding traffic lanes, installing tank barriers, and narrowing the passageways for pedestrians. In some cases, the wall has been built directly across the border, many residents living near the border were evacuated, homes and garden plots were confiscated, and the wall was built directly across the border with border guards with more effective fields of observation and fire.

Concurrent with the sealing of the border between sectors, the East German authorities tightened security along the sector/boundary boundary. Double fence, perimeter strips, and barbed-wire markers were constructed and residents were evacuated. The borders of West Berlin are now as tight as, if not more tightly, sealed as the international boundaries along the Iron Curtain.

Characterization of the Wall

The popular designation of the entire barrier system along the sector boundary has created some false impressions. Actually, the wall is a series of barriers, some of which are continuous and some which are not, a single, uniform feature. Throughout its entire length of 13-1/2 kilometers, the wall is continuous only in the sense that it connects the border with the sector boundary. For about 20 kilometers or 65 percent of the length the wall is continuous only in the sense that it connects the border with the middle section consisting of multiple fences or panels with wire netting, wire in some cases, or concrete and steel reinforcement. In other cases, the wall is continuous only in the sense that it connects the border with a road or railway embankment. The name "wall" is generally reinforced by a small number of photographs showing a tall, solid concrete wall, or a wall built of torn-up pavements, cleared strips, and observational posts. Here and there, however, the wall is nothing more than a low, thin fence or a strip of wire, giving off visual contact between East and West Berliners. Action on the announced plan to build a wall was taken in three stages. The first stage, which part been limited to the suburban areas at either end of the border, where the clearing had consisted mainly of removing orchards, gardens, tool sheds, and a few houses.

In the heart of the city the wall consists almost entirely of masonry or the sealed facades of buildings. This stretch, about 13-1/2 kilometers long, includes the most difficult sections of the wall. The wall is continuous for about 1-1/2 kilometers where the water barriers forming the boundary are parallel by barbed-wire fence.

The second stage part of the wall is at the Brandenburg Gate. Here prefabricated concrete slabs have been arranged to form a wall 7 feet high and 6 feet thick with reinforced steel posts. To the north and south sides of the wall are two rows of concrete and steel reinforcement posts about 1 foot thick. At sharp curves and awkward corners, smaller concrete and steel reinforcement posts are used to support the outer side of the wall.

In most places the wall averages 8 feet high, but along Bernauer Strasse just west of the Brandenburg Gate it rises to 10 feet along the outer corner, even higher. Normally the wall is topped by barbed-wire or concertina wire.

Previously existing walls have been used as primary barriers in those areas of the city where they were available. In some cases, the walls have been strengthened with concrete and steel reinforcement posts. In other cases, the walls have been

wire and, in some cases, broken glass have been added. Masonry barriers also serve as short 1-1/2 meter high walls along the western edge of Treptow and for an almost equal height around the Volkswagen factory in Wilhelmsburg.

AUTHORIZED BORDER CROSSING POINTS	
OF 13 JUNE 1961	
WEDDING	WEDDING
Rudowerstrasse	Wollankstrasse
Hornbostelerstrasse	Brummersstrasse
Hedrichstrasse	Prenzlauerstrasse
Heinrich Heine Strasse	Pankstrasse
WEST BERLINERS CITY	Hedrichstrasse
WEST BERLINERS CITY	Rudowerstrasse
WEST BERLINERS CITY	Invalidenstrasse
WEST BERLINERS CITY	Gorch-Focke-Strasse
WEST BERLINERS CITY	Schoenhauser Allee

* Authorized East Germans and West Berliners presumably can cross at any border points still open.

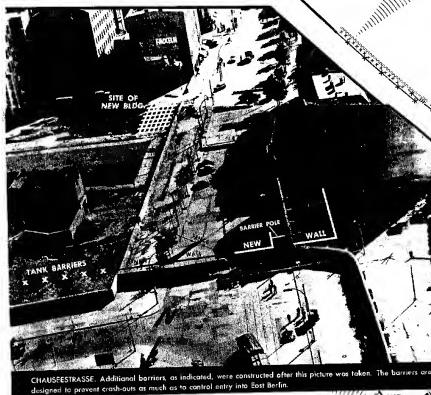
All these physical barriers are policed by a large complement of Soviet and East German security personnel. There are 1000-1500 men at each stationery and mobile post. Stationary posts include a number of observation posts at strategic points, particularly in suburban and semiurban areas. These posts are usually located on rooftops, in trees, top floors of some buildings. An East German observation post has even been mounted on a tall building in the center of the city. Mobile posts and stationery posts guard sensitive and vulnerable areas, primarily street intersections. Mobile guards patrol the barriers. Their mobility -- the mobility of the wall -- gives them a given moment -- provides the physical security with additional security.

By virtue of the wall, the sector boundary has acquired the aura of an international boundary without a change in its legal status. It functions effectively and is accepted by the public as the international boundary of the legally recognized international boundaries dividing West from West.

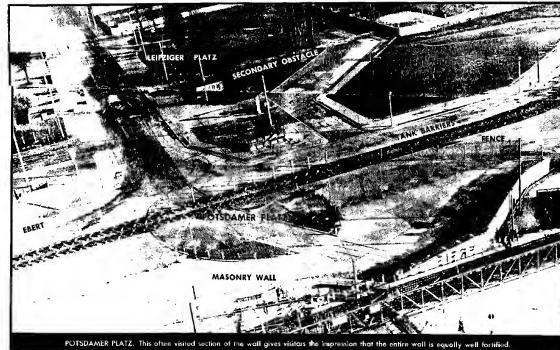
The wall is a major factor in the political situation in Berlin. Its function is to be used in implementing the new West German outcome law which finally stated, is whether flag in the direction of making the sector boundary function as an international boundary.



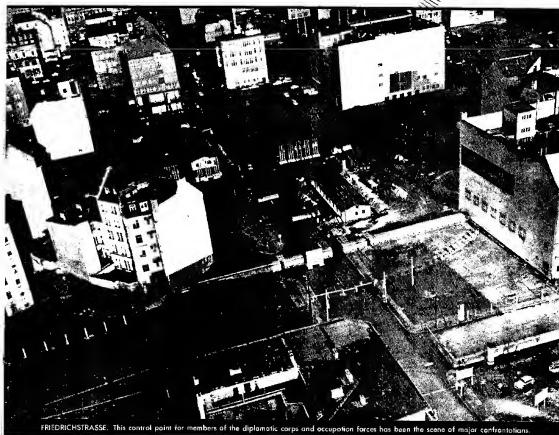
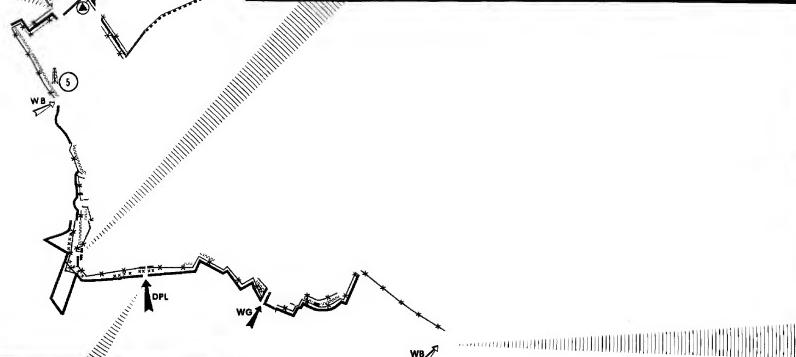
25X1



CHAUSEESTRASSE. Additional barriers, as indicated, were constructed after this picture was taken. The barriers are designed to prevent crash-outs as much as to control entry into East Berlin.



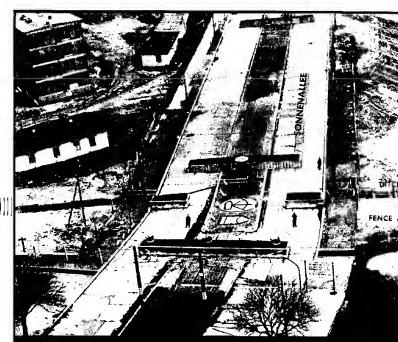
POTSDAMER PLATZ. This often visited section of the wall gives visitors the impression that the entire wall is equally well fortified.



FRIEDRICHSTRASSE. This control point for members of the diplomatic corps and occupation forces has been the scene of major confrontations.



OBERBAUMBRÜCKE, one of the four official crossing points for West Berlin. Although a guardhouse and steel tank barriers have been added since this photograph was taken, the waterway alone provides a very effective barrier.



SONNENALIEE. Every effort has been made to give the barriers an established, permanent appearance.

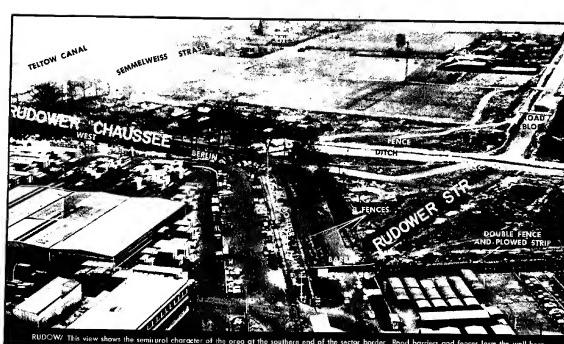


FIGURE 11 This view shows the semirural character of the area at the southern end of the sector border. Road barriers and fences form the wall.

35948 262

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL